

[Religious Cult of Father Divine]

[FRANK BYRD RELIGIOUS CULT FATHER DEVINE NY?] DUPLICATE NO. [1500?]
DUPLICATE No-1 Dup

[As Told To The Writer By The?]

[CHIEF OF POLICE SAYVILLE,
LONG ISLAND.?)

Major T. (Father) Divine has become almost a legendary figure in lower Long Island where he first set up his cult headquarters. Many stories about his peculiar religious doings and subsequent tiffs with the law are told by native inhabitants. The following is only one of many. The writer has taken the liberty of changing names of persons and [?] places.

The changes as they appear in the story: [????????????????]

Major T. (Father) Divine to Rev. Andrew Elijah Jones.

Police Chief Tucker to Chief Becker.

Macon Street to Pudding Hill Road.

Sayville to Hopeville.

Mineola to Salt Point.

Judge Smith to Judge Walker. x x x check on New Yorker June 13, 20, 27, 1936 "PEACE IN THE KINGDOM."

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When they first came to town nobody paid much attention to them. They were “ just another group of [Negroes] “ Niggers who had moved in. They were a little different from the others though. Instead of gallivanting all [?] the country-side at night, drinking [?] made [?] and doing [?] [?]-[?] until almost dawn, they worked hard in the white folks' kitchens all day and, as seen as night came, hurriedly finished up with their pots and pans and made a bee-line for Andrew Elijah Jones' little meeting house in the back of Joe Korsak's grocery store. [??] Andrew Jones, a squat, [?] wooly -headed, middle aged , little black man Negro with a sly, rougish roguish wicked little gleam in his eye, was their leader. In the daytime he ran the Hopeville employment agency for “colored domestics” but at night, he was a man of God. In fact, many of his followers insisted that he was “God His self—in person”; and nobody could [?] dispute them [?] [???]. Their bodies belonged to the white folks during the day but their souls, both day and night, were the exclusive property of their [?] ,foxy, pint-sized [?]. They even slept with him in a big [?] old [?] house planted among a groves of elm trees at the end of [?] Plum Hill Road. They called themselves his disciples; his children. And they called him “Father—Father Jones Andrew - Elijah.”

Well, the townspeople didn't mind this so much but that business of sightly worship in the back of Korsak Korsak's s store began to get them down. [?] When the sisters and brothers began to feel the spirit in earnest, 2 they whooped and hollered something awful. And their shouts, in a quiet, suburban place like Hopeville where everyone went to bed early, could be [?] heard for miles around.

The townsfolk rose up in arms and got together to see what could be done about it. They finally decided that Andrew, Jones, that is, Father Andrew Elijah had to go. A representative representative committee waited on him at his place [?] business bright and early one morning and did what they could to persuade the good reverend to move on to greener pastures.

“Nothing doing!” or words to that effect, answered the right reverend.

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He was doing all right in Hopeville and the idea of giving it up was the last thing that ever occurred to him. His disciples were all employed as cooks, maids, gardeners and chauffeurs in the homes of the countryside 's wealthiest people and they brought all their earnings home to him. Why should he move? The very idea was preposterous.

The natives retreated for another war-council and Father Andrew's disciples [?] continued happily, almost ecstatically, about their work. Whether they were in the midst of shopping for their employers, or baking a deep-dish apple pie, they unexpectedly used to burst [?] with little exclamations of delight like "Peace" "It "It's truly wonderful!" Thank you Father!" and so on. Even when they stumbled and fell or accidentally upset a glass of water in their masters' or mistresses' laps, they said: "Thank you, Father. I'm sorry."

Well even then, the employers couldn't find it in themselves 3 [?]

to be mad.

"They're just great, big children," they'd say, [?] and smile indulgently.

The fact is, the religious satellites, who called them selves by / such funny names as "Happy Boy Job", "Patience Delight", "Eternal Faith" etc. were honest as the day is long and were excellent servants in every other respect. In addition to that, they could be hired for half the price of the lazy, sullen, " shiftless Negroes "Niggers" who were [?] natives of the town.

And so, Father Andrew -Elijah remained. And [?] when the white housewives greeted their [?] cooks and maids with an amused, [?]:

"Good morning, Charity Light [?]. How are you today?"

Charity Light would answer in all earnestness:

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"Peace [??] ain't it wonderful? Father Andrew -Elijah's [is god! Do?] you Y'all want bacon and 'n' eggs for fo breakfast breakfas' dis mo'nin!"

Even on Main Street it was not unusual to hear one of Father Andrew's angels, in a none too melodious voices and with the [?] of the [?] in his eyes, singing: "Father Andrew Elijah's is the Light Of the World."

The " Jonesites, " as the [?] were called, soon saved enough to buy the two houses adjoining their property on [?] Plum Hill Road. [?] One of the houses was converted into a sort of temple where the nightly meetings were held and Sunday dinners served. Free dinners, they were, and sumptuous. Feast to rival those of Biblical times. Not only the " angels " participated. Everyone was invited # Not many outsiders came 4 at first. They were a [?] still a little wary. A few of the bolder townspeople ventured in, however, and came away with wild stories of the huge banquet tables and savory cooked meals. More and more people appeared as the Sundays passed. Some came all the way from the city or the end of the island. And they [?] were not disappointed. The banquets were as colorful and extravagant as they had been pictured. But most amazing as all was the fact that, of all the hundreds of people who ate their fill, nobody paid. Everything was free. The treat was on Father Andrew- Elijah.

"God provides everything for his people," some of the angels were heard to say, as the free chicken, pork chops, roast brown duck and suckling pig, smothered spare ribs and an assortment of vegetables, fruits and nuts were passed around in abundance.

Judging from the size of some of their eyes, the [darkies?]the visitors still did not . believe it was true, even after they had sat down at the tables.

With hundreds of Negroes disables [?]darkies storming the quiet, [beurgous?] community in dusty, broken down cars every Sunday afternoon, running over the carefully tended lawns and trampling the municipal shrubbery, the ire of the townspeople was once more

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aroused. They trooped down in [?] a body to demand that the police do something about it. "Chief Becker, " the spokesman for the group began, "You've got to do something about those niggers. They're not [?] nuisance but they're running property values down to nothing, they've got most of us crazy, whooping and hollering unil until all hours of the night and putting on their [?] on the lawn."

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Well, election [?] coming up. Chief becker got busy. "No - Parking" signs began to appear everywhere in the vicinity of the Kingdom, although [?] no one could remember having [?] ever seen one [?] in the history of the town. Many of the poor whites [?] [?] problems for the Kingdom by letting visitors park their cars at twenty five cents [??] each . Chief Becker, not to be outdone, began stopping all cars, looking at registration certificates, and being generally annoying to all niggers seen driving a car in the neighborhood. This did not stop the crowds. In fact, they got bigger. Chief Becker cussed a blue streak. He pulled his hair out. But no matter what he did or how much he raved and ranted , the influx could not be stopped. he knew that he was licked. The Chief was licked - and he knew it.

"Boys," he said to the citizens' committee," [?] [???" "Iv'e tried everything I could think of but the niggers keep comin'. I'm sorry. there's There's nothing else I can do."

The town-fathers, more alarmed than ever, got together and petitioned "God's" arrest on the grounds of not only maintaining [?] [???" but being a public nuisance , [?]. The fact that the populace was becoming more and more jittery through lack of sleep caused by the " Kingdom's " nightly goings-on was specifically sighted in the petition and Father Andrew - Elijah was hustled hauled unceremoniously into court. The atmosphere there was so hostile, however, that the defense moved for a change of venue and the proceedings were resumed in the little neighboring town of Salt [?].

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Judge Walker, who presided at the hearing and who didn't like niggers anyhow, literally jumped on the good reverend with both feet. He not only sentenced him to a year in jail but fined him five hundred dollars to boot.

Four days later, much to the surprise of everyone, Judge Walker dropped dead.

The Doctor said: "Heart trouble."

Father Andrew-Elijah, grinning with a sly, [?] look and acting for all the world like the cat that swallowed the canary, proclaimed [?] [???

"The [?] force of nature work with me."

The townspeople back in Hopeville shook [?] their heads and / began to wonder if there wasn't something to the story of old Jones ' [?] black-magic after all.

The "angels" went hop-skipping through the streets shouting: "We told you so! Father Andrew- Elijah Elijah's God! Peace! [?] Ain't it wonderful?"

Old [?] Andrew's slick city lawyers [?] appealed the case and the [?] [?] immediately reversed the late Judge Walker's fateful decision. Then the " [niggers?] " really got beside themselves. That night they hang [?] [??] in the trees, danced wildly around a [?] banquet table , flung their arms skyward, babbled in unknown tongues and sang, more lustily than ever: "Father Andrew- Elijah Elijah's the [?] of the world!" [?] Of The World!" Once again. [?] Once again there was peace in the kingdom. xxx 132 11 132 132 [1454?]